

NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
318 South Sixth Street
Springfield, IL 62701
Tel: 217/492-4450

RODGER A. HEATON
U.S. ATTORNEY
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS



For Immediate Release
February 3, 2006

Contact: Patricia A. McInerney
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(217) 492-4450

Chicago Man Faces Counterfeiting and Gun Charges

Springfield, IL— Rodger A. Heaton, United States Attorney for the Central District of Illinois, announced that a federal grand jury today returned an indictment charging Samuel Oatis III, age 28, of Chicago, with receiving more than \$24,000 in counterfeit U.S. currency and being a felon in possession of a firearm.

The indictment alleges that on January 12, 2006, in Montgomery county, Illinois, Oatis had more than \$24,000 in counterfeit U.S. currency and possessed a 9mm handgun. At the time, Oatis was a felon, having been previously convicted of a felony offense, including attempted aggravated burglary, forgery, and possession of cannabis.

Oatis was previously charged in a criminal complaint filed on January 13, 2006. According to the affidavit filed in support of the complaint, a trooper with the Illinois State Police stopped Oatis' car after he had observed it traveling northbound on Interstate 55 at 93 miles per hour at approximately 9:15 a.m. During an inventory of the vehicle, the trooper discovered the handgun and approximately \$25,000 in counterfeit currency.

Oatis was ordered detained in federal custody pending trial. If convicted, the offense of receiving counterfeit currency carries a maximum statutory penalty of 20 years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000. For possession of a firearm by a felon, the penalty is up to 10 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the U.S. Secret Service and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Patricia A. McInerney.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

